

Amendments to the Specification:

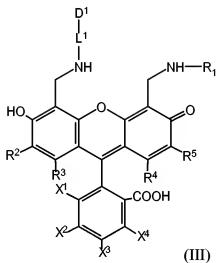
Please replace the paragraph on page 7, lines 1-21, with the following amended paragraph:

The fluorescent energy transfer labelling reagents of the present invention preferably include a target bonding group capable of forming a covalent bond with a target material to enable the reagent to label the material, such as a biological compound. The target bonding group may be linked to the chromophore structure via a linker group, preferably (but not exclusively) derived by chemical modification of the 4'- and/or 5'-aminomethyl groups of 4', 5'-bis-aminomethyl-fluorescein. If 4', 5'-bis-aminomethyl-fluorescein-5(6)-carboxylic acid is used as the dye building block, the 5- or 6-carboxylic moiety may also be chemically modified by well known methods so as to introduce a target bonding group. The target bonding group may be any group suitable for attaching the dye to a target material, such as a carrier material, a biological compound, or a further dye molecule. For example, the target bonding group may be a reactive group that can react under suitable conditions with a complementary functional group of a target material. Alternatively, the target bonding group [[F]] may be a functional group and the target may contain the reactive constituent. In either case, the target molecule becomes covalently labelled with the reagent according to the invention. Suitable reactive groups are selected from N-hydroxysuccinimidyl ester, N-hydroxy-sulphosuccinimidyl ester, isothiocyanate, haloacetamide, dichlorotriazine, maleimide, sulphonyl halide, acyl halide,

anhydride and phosphoramidite. Suitable functional groups are selected from hydroxy, amino, sulphydryl, and carboxyl groups.

Please replace the paragraph on page 7, line 22 through page 8, line 21, with the following amended paragraph:

Suitably, the fluorescent energy transfer labelling reagent according to the invention is a compound having the structure (III):



wherein:

D¹ is an acceptor dye selected from the group consisting of xanthine dyes, rhodamine dyes and cyanine dyes;

R¹ is selected from H, an amino-protecting group, the group $-L^2-F-L^2-R_x$ and the group $-L^2-D^2$, where D² is a fluorescent dye selected from the group consisting of xanthine dyes, rhodamine dyes and cyanine dyes;

R^2 , R^3 , R^4 and R^5 independently represent H, F, Cl, $C_1 - C_6$ alkyl, $C_1 - C_6$ substituted alkyl, $C_1 - C_6$ alkoxy, sulfonate, sulfone, amido, nitrile, aryl or heteroaryl; or R^2 and R^3 and/or R^4 and R^5 taken together may be linked to form a fused aromatic or heteroaromatic ring system;

X^1 , X^2 , X^3 and X^4 independently represent H, F, Cl, $C_1 - C_6$ alkyl, $C_1 - C_6$ alkenyl, $C_1 - C_6$ alkynyl, $COOR'$, SO_3H , CH_2OH , the group $-L^2-F-L^3-R_x$ and the group $-L^3-D^3$, where D^3 is a fluorescent dye selected from the group consisting of xanthine dyes, rhodamine dyes and cyanine dyes; and R' is selected from hydrogen and $C_1 - C_4$ alkyl; $[[F]]R_x$ is a target bonding group; and

L^1 , L^2 and L^3 are each a linking group and each independently comprises a group containing from 1 to 40 linked atoms selected from carbon atoms which may optionally include one or more groups selected from $-C(O)-$, $-C(S)-$, $-NR'-$, $-O-$, $-S-$, $-CR'=CR'-$ and $-CO-NR'-$ groups, where R' is hereinbefore defined.